

AUGUST 22, 2003



Metropolitan
Transportation
Authority

One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA
90012-2952

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THROUGH: ROGER SNOBLE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

FROM: JAMES L. de la LOZA
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

SUBJECT: AVAILABILITY OF FEDERAL JOB ACCESS
AND REVERSE COMMUTE COMPETITIVE GRANT FUNDS
AND SOLICITATION FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS

ISSUE

For FY 2002 and FY 2003, Congress has allocated a total of \$3,362,172 in federal Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program funding to Los Angeles County. This Board Box Item outlines the MTA staff actions that will be taken to announce the availability of the federal funding and to initiate a competitive grants process that would include a solicitation for grant applications from prospective Los Angeles County recipients. The goal is to identify eligible projects so that a recommended list may be brought forward for MTA Board approval and a subsequent filing made to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for grant funding on behalf of Los Angeles County. This report is submitted as an informational item.

BACKGROUND

The \$3,362,172 in JARC funding for Los Angeles County is authorized under Section 3037 of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). JARC funding requires a 50% local match. The JARC Program itself has two major goals: (1) to provide transportation services in urban, suburban and rural areas that would assist welfare recipients and other low-income individuals in accessing employment opportunities; and (2) to increase collaboration among regional transportation providers, human service agencies and related service providers, employers and affected communities.

Eligible JARC applicants may include public agencies that provide transportation facilities or services within Los Angeles County. Local governments and non-profit organizations are also eligible applicants for JARC funding. Eligible JARC projects may qualify for funding that would address Job Access requirements, Reverse Commute requirements, or both.

JARC Project Requirements

A *Job Access* project is directed at implementing new or expanded transportation services. These services are targeted at filling transportation gaps and designed to transport welfare recipients and low-income individuals to and from jobs and other employment-related support services such as childcare and job readiness, training and retention services.

Job Access funds may be applied to the capital and operating costs of new or expanded transportation services. The funds also may be used for such activities as service extensions, guaranteed ride home, initiating shuttle service and ridesharing activities.

A *Reverse Commute* Project facilitates the provision of new or expanded public mass transportation services for the general public from urban areas, suburban and rural areas to suburban work places. Reverse Commute funding may include, but may not be limited to:

- Bus, train, car and van pooling services, van routes; and
- The purchase or lease by a nonprofit organization or public agency of a van or bus dedicated to shuttling employees from their residences and transit transfer points to a suburban work place and back again.

NEXT STEPS

MTA staff is developing an application package that will be released to the public by August 22, 2003. A workshop will be held in mid-September 2003 to provide additional information regarding project eligibility, project selection process, and assistance on completing the applications. The applications will be due to the MTA by November 7, 2003.

In evaluating the projects, MTA staff will follow FTA guidelines and awarding criteria. The application evaluation process is expected to be completed by December 30, 2003. After the evaluation process, MTA staff will prepare a final recommended list of projects for MTA Board approval at the February 2004 meeting. After MTA Board approval, the recommended projects will be included in a JARC grant proposal for FTA consideration and grant award.

Prepared by:

Armineh Saint, Transportation Planning Manager
Programming and Policy Analysis